

## Modern Christian Literature in Sanskrit

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When the Christian missionaries ~~descended on~~<sup>came to</sup> India in the last century they found Sanskrit still the medium of higher thought and culture. People of upper castes who mattered most used it widely. The missionaries of the time thought that if they were to make any impact on Indian society, they would have to learn the language of higher castes and render their writings in it to be accessible to them. Once the Brahmins or others who had the upper hand in society were drawn to Christianity, it would be easier for them, the missionaries, to spread the message of Christ among the common people who would feel attracted towards it, having found their superiors taking to it. With this idea in view they took to the study of Sanskrit, wrote its grammars, compiled its dictionaries, prepared its text books. With all this equipment they took to the translation of the *Bible* into Sanskrit, the *Old and the New Testaments*, the *Sermon on the Mount*, and so on. They also composed many an original work in Sanskrit, in verse and prose, on Lord Christ. The result : A whole class of Christian literature in Sanskrit grew over a period of time. It would be worth its while to have a close look at it. And this is what is precisely attempted in the pages to follow.

The activity in the field of the translation of the *Bible* into Sanskrit began as early as 1808. The *New Testament of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ* was translated into Sanskrit from the original Greek by the missionaries at Serampore under the superintendence of William Carey in three volumes, the third volume making its appearance in 1811, three years after the publication of the first. This was followed by the Sanskrit translation of the *Old and the New Testaments*, again from Serampore in 1821. In 1845 the Baptist Mission



Press, Calcutta published the *Book of the Prophet Isaiah* in Sanskrit. In 1860 appeared the *Bible for the Pandits* with the first three chapters of *Genesis* 'diffusively and unreservedly' commented in Sanskrit and English by J.R. Ballantyne from London. The translations started in the nineteenth century continued in the twentieth century as well. The Bible Society of India brought out the latest reprint of the *New Testament* in Sanskrit : *Prabhuṇā Yisukhrisṭena Nirūpitasya Niyamasya Granthasamigrahaḥ* as late as in 1962. Attempts were made alongside translating the *Old and the New Testaments*, certain portions thereof. The Calcutta Baptist Missionaries brought out from Calcutta in 1843 the translation from Hebrew into Sanskrit of the *Book of Genesis* and the part of *Exodus*. Two collections of the *Proverbs* of Solomon in Sanskrit appeared from the School Book Society's Press, Calcutta and The Baptist Mission Press, Calcutta in 1842 and 1846 respectively.

The Baptist Mission Press in Calcutta has been very active in bringing out Christian literature in Sanskrit translation. It brought out the collection of the Gospels of four Christian saints in a single volume : *Khrṣṭa caritam* : *Arthato* (?) *Mathi-Marka-Luka-Yohanair Viracitam Susamivāda-catuṣṭayam* in 1878. It also brought out separate volumes on the Gospels of *Mathi*, *Mark* and *Luk*. The one on *Mathi* under the title *Māthilikhitah Susamivādah* appeared in 1877 and the ones on *Mark* under the title *Mārkalikhitah Susamivādah* and *Satyadharmaśāstram* : *Mārkalikhitah Susamivādah* : *Arthato* (?) *Prabhor Yisukhrṣṭīya-caritra-darpaṇam* appeared in 1878 and 1884 respectively. The Gospel of *Luk* came out under the title *Lūkalikhitah Susamivādah* in 1878. The Gospel of *St. John* came out in Sanskrit under the title : *Yohana-likhitah Susamivādah* not from the Baptist Mission Press, Calcutta but from the Basel Mission Press, Mangalore in 1876.

Of the portions of the *Bible* it is the Sermon on the Mount that has attracted good notice of the Sanskritists. There are at least three independent translations of it into Sanskrit by Lachmi Dhar Shastri published by him from Delhi in 1928. One two from



the Bible Society of India, Bangalore, by K.P. Urumese from Trichur, the last two published in 1974. The *Sermon* also appears in a succinct form in every creative work on Christ in Sanskrit. A very interesting work in the field of translation is the *Khrīstayañāvidhiḥ*. The work is a translation in Sanskrit of the *Ordo Missae* in Latin by Ambrose Sureschandra Roy and was published from Calcutta in 1926. Apart from translations there has been a lot of original composition on Christianity in Sanskrit both in the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. About half a dozen smaller works like the *Īśvaroktaśāstradhārā* (The course of Divine Revelation) by John Mulr, the *Parama-stava*, a hymn in verse on God, *Paulacarita*, a short life of apostle Paul in verse, the *Khrīstasaṅgīta*, the history of Jesus Christ in verse, the same *Khrīstadharmakāumudī* by J.R. Balantyne, which is a comparison of Christianity with Hindu Philosophy, in prose and a critical review of *Khrīstadhar makāumudīśa mālocana* in prose again by Brajalal Mukhopadhyaya.

The twentieth century too has seen many an original publication on Christ and Christianity, the latest and the biggest of which is the *Kristubhāgavatam*, a *Mahākāvya* in Sanskrit in thirty three cantos with a thousand and six hundred stanzas on the life of Lord Christ by P.C. Devassia which won him in 1980 the coveted Sahitya Akademi award in Sanskrit. The thirty three cantos of the *Kāvya* correspond to the number of the years of the Lord's life. Although in narrating the story of the Lord the author relies on the versions of the Gospels and some reputed biographies of Christ and is faithful to incidents as recorded there, yet he shows his freedom and imagination as a poet to introduce poetic elements which however do not dilute the authenticity of the narrative. The poem is simple and straightforward, composed in the much-valued *Vaidarbhī* style.

The *Mahākāvya*, the greatest so far, on Lord Christ in Sanskrit has, as the author himself points out in the Preface, many allusions to and illustrations from the Hindu *Purāṇas* and *Epics*. This the author ascribes to his growth in an atmosphere of Sanskrit literature





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which could not but appear even in a work on Christ. Another great influence on the author in this was His Eminence Joseph Cardinal Parecatll, the Archbishop of Ernakulam who, he says, believes that the Church in India must have its roots in the culture and the tradition of the land. A Sanskrit scholar, he has played an important role in the Indianization of the Church.

The stanzas in the Mahākāvya have a flow of their own which cannot but charm a reader. A stanza or two from canto XVII dealing with the *Sermon on the Mount* could well be reproduced here by way of specimen :

*bhikṣā tvayā dakṣiṇahastadattā* भिक्षा त्वया दक्षिणहस्तदत्ता  
*na jñāyatām vāmakareṇa te sā* । न ज्ञायतां वामकरेण ते सा ।  
*dānasya caivam nibhṛtaṁ kṛtasya* दानस्यैव न निभृतं कृतस्य  
*pitā phalaṁ dāsyati guptadarśi* ॥<sup>1</sup> पिता फलं दास्यति गुप्तदर्शी

"When you give alms, do not let the left hand know what your right hand has done. For the alms-giving thus done in secret, your Father who sees in secret shall reward you."

*yūyam mā sañcinuta nidhim ātmārtham urvyām hi yasmāt*  
*kīṭādyās taṁ kṣayam upanayanty atra muṣṇanti caurāḥ* ।  
*svarge tān sañcinuta vibhavān ye hi tair na hriyante*  
*vittam yasmin bhavati bhuvane tatra cittam ca vaḥ syāt* ॥<sup>2</sup>

"Do not lay up for yourself treasures on earth, where moths and other insects consume them, and where thieves break in and steal them; but lay up those treasures in heaven where they are not consumed by them, for, where your treasure is, in that world will your heart also be."

Of the smaller Kāvya on Lord Christ could be mentioned *Sree Yesusourabham* by Soma Varma Raja which has 67, 70, 78, and 86 stanzas in its first, second, third and fourth cantos respectively. The Kāvya closes with five hymns of which the first is a prayer, a string of seven stanzas called the *Bhajanasaptakam*, the second, a hymn to the Sacred Heart, the third, the praise of Christ, the fourth, the hymn to Christ and the fifth, the *Bhaktajijīviṣā*, an expression of the

desire of the devotee to see the Master and to live according to his tenets. In its 301 stanzas in mellifluous Sanskrit the author sums up the whole story of the *Bible*. Though following the Biblical narrative faithfully, he takes reasonable licence in versification. The reactions of the multitude gathered at the foot of the Cross, Christ's enemies, his devotees, the sorrowful women and the good men and their addresses to the crucified are all presented in the present work with deftness. Both the genius and the originality of the author are reflected in this part and the words of the spectators on Calvary sink deep into the heart:

*Kruśa paramaviśālo 'py ugrarūpam tvadīyam* क्रुश परमविशालोऽप्युग्र-  
*manasi kalayato bhīḥ pāpinaḥ kasya na syāt* । भीतिं कलयन्  
*tvam asi kaṭhīnapīdābhogaparyāyavācī* त्वमसि कठिनापीदामभोगपर्यायवाचीः  
*nikhīlajananiṣevyo divyasaṅgena jātah* ॥<sup>3</sup> निखिलजननिषेव्यो दिव्यसाङ्गेन जन्मोऽस्मिन्

"O wide cross ! Who will not be frightened to see or think about you. You have become another word for grave pain. But now you are a thing of worship, for you have carried our Lord on you."

In the lamentation of Mary, the Mother of Lord Christ, a note of intense sorrow is struck. The words therein betray in full the motherly pangs. It looks while writing about this the poet had at the back of his mind the description of the lamentation of Rati in the *Kumārasambhava* and that of Aja in the *Raghuvamśa* of Kālidāsa. Not only is the whole setting the same, even the metre is so:

*gatasamīḥam avekṣya vihvālā* गतसमीहं सवेक्ष्य विह्वला  
*Mariyā svāṅkagatam nijātmajam* । मरिया स्वान्कगतं निजआत्माजम् ।  
*vilālāpa sabāṣpalocanā* विलालापः सबाषपालोचनः ।  
*samaduḥkhān akhīlāṅś ca kurvatī* ॥<sup>4</sup> समदुःखानां निखिलानां च कुर्वती

"Mary saw the lifeless body of her son on her lap. She was overcome with grief. She cried shedding tears, making all present there equally sorry."

The expression *vilālāpa sabāṣpalocanā* cannot but remind one of the *Raghuvamśa*'s *vilālāpa sabāṣpagad-gadam*<sup>5</sup> and *samaduḥkhān akhīlāṅś ca kurvatī* of the *Kumāra-sambhava*'s *vilālāpa vikīṛṇamūrdhaja*







*samaduḥkhām Iva kurvatī sthālīm. So do the lines  
krpaṇo mama dairghyam āyusaḥ. kaṭhīnāḥ khalv Iha  
dattavān v idhiḥ<sup>6</sup> of Kumārasambhava's na vidīrye  
kaṭhīnāḥ khalu striyaḥ<sup>7</sup>*

Kālidāsa's influence on the author is also noticeable in the stanza in the beginning of his work :

*kva me nirviṣayā buddhiḥ*

*kva śrīyeṣumahākathā I*

*mohād bhavāmy āruruḥṣur*

*āmayāvi mahāgirim II<sup>8</sup>*

"Where is the intellect devoid of the knowledge of the subject matter and where is the great magnificent story of Jesus. It is an attempt, like that of a sick man trying to climb a high mountain."

This clearly is inspired by the well-known *Raghuvamśa* verse:

*kva sūryaprabhavo vaṁśaḥ*

*kva cālpaviṣayā matiḥ I*

*titīṣur dustarami mohād*

*udupenāsmi sāgaram II<sup>9</sup>*

"Where is the race sprung from the sun and where is my intellect of limited scope. It is under a delusion that I am desirous of crossing, by means of a raft, the ocean so difficult to cross."

A spirit of the divine and a sense of devotion pervade the whole of the *Sreeyesourabham* which is indeed a happy blend of simplicity and profundity. It reflects the glorious and the heavenly personality of Lord Christ in a most impressive manner and amply reveals the poet in the author whose *Khaṇḍakāvya*—it is to this category that his work belongs according to rhetoricians—makes a very pleasant reading. There are Similes, Metaphors and Fancies here which do tickle the Sahṛdaya, the connoisseur and add further charm to the work.

The author is in the habit of twisting some of the foreign words to give them a different look, not necessarily Sanskritic, to make them fit into Sanskrit diction.

Abraham he puts as Abraha, David as Dāvīda, Gabriel as Gabriyet, Elizabeth as Yellīśvā, Mary as both Merī and Mariyā, Augustus Caesar as Agastasīsara, Christ as Iso and Yesu, Herod as Heroda, Judea as Yūdāya, Messiah as both Mihisa and Misiha, Nazareth as Nas-ratama, Jerusalem as Jasrela, Magdelene as Magdalanā and so on.

Only those writers can compose works in Sanskrit who have thorough knowledge of its literature. The writers of the works on Christ and Christianity, even though devout Christians, inheriting or adopting the Sanskrit tradition as they did, could not keep themselves away from it even while dealing with themes not part and parcel of it. By sheer habit sometimes they would use old words to denote new ideas. The use of the word *vaidika* in the poem under reference in the sense of a Christian priest is a case in point. An extension of this word is *Vaidikāśrama* in the sense of a Christian Seminary :

*Vatavātūradeśīya-*

*vaidikāśramacoditaḥ I*

*karomi nūtanākhyānam*

*yeśusaurabhasamjñitam II<sup>10</sup>*

"Impelled by the friends in the Vatavathur Seminary I compose this Kāvya, the *Sreeyesourabham*."

It was again the force of the Sanskrit tradition that weighed with the present author to start his Kāvya on the life of Lord Christ with an invocation to goddess Sarasvatī :

*yā tu saṅgītasahityakalācaitanyarūpīṇī I*

*satām ādhārabhūtām tām vande vidyādhidevetām II<sup>11</sup>*

"I salute the goddess of learning who wields the authority over music, literature and art. She is the support of all good-natured people and poets."

It is the influence of Sanskrit tradition again that makes the author refer to the celestial Ganges in the context of Holy Mary carrying lord Christ :



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तलपं गवदानिभद्रमं चित्पुमसो गर्भवधारी ॥  
 सः 'dhyuvāsāñjasa Meri hamśivabhranadītaṁ ॥<sup>12</sup>

"Mary who was carrying the son of god in her womb was lying in the manger as the swan lies in the celestial Ganges."

The description in the work of the regions becoming bright and gentle breeze blowing at the birth of Christ is a piece with similar descriptions which have become a type now in Sanskrit literature :

praseduḥ kṣaṇam evāśā marutaś ca sukḥā vavuh |

babhūvur nirmalāś cāpaḥ kūpeṣv api saraḥsv api ||<sup>13</sup>

Like the other poems on Christ's life, this poem too has the Sermon on the Mount in brief.

Another smaller original work in Sanskrit prose on the life of Lord Christ is the *Yeśucaritam* by J. Marcel who styles himself as Marsalācārya. The work he divides in five Adhyāyas, in beautiful, chaste Sanskrit which has a classical ring about it. The entire life of the Lord is put here succinctly in an easy and fluent style. Two small paragraphs from this will be sufficient to form an idea of its Sanskrit :

sa yadā svasmai dattam Yisāyasya pustakam udaghāṭayat tadā tatredam likhitam avartata. Tśvaro mayy avasthitah..... viśāda vidīrṇāntaraṅgān sukhayitūmi baddhānāmi muktīm andhānāmi darśanam ca pradātum..... māmi prajighāya saḥ.<sup>14</sup>

"When he opened the book of Yisāya given to him he found it written there. The Lord is in me. He has sent me to provide happiness to the sad and to give release to the bound and sight to the blind."

paran tu bho śrotārah yuṣmān Idam vaktum abhyutsahe ye yuṣmabhyam druhanti teṣām api hitam eva tanuta. yuṣmān śapanti ye tebhya 'py āśiṣam eva datta. ye yuṣmān apavadanti teṣām api hitam prārthayadhvam. yas tava ekasmin kapole praharati tasmai kapolam anyam api pradarsaya.....yo vā ko vā bhavatu tāvako yācakah, dehi tasmai. mā abhivāñcha tatpratyādānam. kiñ ca yuṣmān prati yādṛśam ācāram abhila-  
 atha, tādrśo bhavatu yuṣmākam api itareṣv ācārah.....

"But O you the listeners, I feel like telling—Even those who are hostile to you, you do good to them too. Those who curse you, them too you bless. Those who denounce you, you pray for their welfare too. To the one who slaps you on one cheek, you show him the other one. Whosoever may ask you for something, give that to him. Don't care for any return for it. Moreover, the kind of treatment you want for yourself, meet the same to others."

The next work which is not an original composition in Sanskrit but very much looks like so is the *Mahātyāgī* of M.O. Avara. The work was originally composed in Malayalam but was translated from it into Sanskrit by K.P. Narayana Pisharoty. The work in verse meaning literally the Man of Sacrifice is a poetic reflection on the seven last words uttered by Jesus Christ from the Cross. The Malayalam original had attained great popularity and had for some three decades been the text book for examinations in the Universities of Madras, Travancore and Kerala. It was its success that had prompted the author to arrange for its Sanskrit translation. "He wanted to see the story of Christ portrayed in the great classical language of India."

The *Mahātyāgī* is a fine work of poetry in 163 stanzas. The thought in it is so serene, the language so imaginative and the versification so meticulously correct. The environments of the crucifixion of Christ have been so poetically treated here that those who read the work cannot but have their eyes moistened. The lines which portray the effect of the words "Forgive them, o Father, because they know not what they do" are the best in this work of which the following four lines bear reproduction :

kāruṇyārdramate kṣamasva bho

aparādham kṛtam ebhir ldrśam |

yad ime na viduḥ svakarma vā

na ca vā tvatkaruṇām api prabho ||

The work being a Kāvya, a poem, it affords the author ample scope for the flight of his imagination. The arms of Christ stretched on the Cross the poet

परमं मेः श्रोतारः, युष्मासिद्धं वक्तुमभ्युत्साहे ये युष्मभ्यं द्रुहन्ति तेषामपि हितामेव तनुता । युष्मान् शपन्ति ये तेभ्यो 'प्य आशिषामेव दत्ता । ये युष्मान् अपवादन्ति तेषामपि हितामेव प्रार्थयध्वम् । यस्तव एकस्मिन् कपोले प्राहरति तस्माि कपोलमप्यपि प्रदर्शय । यो वा को वा भवतु तावको याचकः, देहि तस्माि । मा अभिवाञ्छा तत्प्रत्यदानम् । किं च युष्मान् प्रति यादृशम् आचारम् अभिला-  
 अथा, तादृशो भवतु युष्माकम् अपि इतरेष्व आचाराः.....

तस्माि

न-मे अपरेलम नम माहि प्रदर्शय । यो वा को वा भवतु तावको

यति मा युष्मान् प्राहुरसिद्धं कथं ता दृष्टे भवतु युष्माकम् अपि इतरेष्व आचाराः.....



takes as indicative of the readiness on the part of Christ to embrace or as wings to soar aloft to carry all misery of mankind on his shoulders:

nijapārśvayuge bhujadvayam निजोपार्श्वयुगे भुजद्वयं  
 śubhadāyī praviśārayan bhavān शुभदायि प्रविशारयन् भवान्  
 kruśadāruṇi kim nu vartate क्रुशदरुणि किं नु वर्तते  
 jagadāśleṣaṇabaddhakautukah ॥ जगदाश्लेषणबद्धकौतुकः ॥  
 athavā naralokagām vyathām अथवा नारलोकगाम व्यथाम्  
 akhilām skandhatale tvam udvahan अखिलाम् स्कन्धतले त्वम् उद्वहन्  
 pravatitya patatrayor dvayam प्रवतित्य पतत्रयोरद्वयम्  
 dharanīto dayitum kim udyatah ?<sup>17</sup> धरणीतो दयितुं किम् उद्यताह ?

The Sanskrit expression in the poem has a classical ring about it

mihirah kiraṇair nijaiḥ śubhair मिहिराः किरणैर्नजैः शुभैः  
 jagadandhatvam apākaroty asau । जगदन्दधत्वम् अपाकरोत्यसौ  
 dyutim asya mahātmanah katham द्युतिम् अस्या महात्मानस्य कथम्  
 punar īkṣeta divāndhakausīkah ॥<sup>18</sup> पुनरिक्षेत् दिवान्दहाकुसिकः ॥

"While the sun with its powerful rays takes away the blindness of the earth, how can owl which cannot see during daytime see the greatness of the Great Light?"

Like the poet of the *Sreeyesousourabham* the poet of the *Mahātyāgī* too Sanskritizes many foreign words by just twisting them. The classic example of this is the word *kruśa* which can be formed from the Sanskrit root *kruś*, to cry, for the English cross. The same he does with the words *paradise* which he puts in Sanskrit as *parudīśa* and *pelican* which he puts in Sanskrit as *palikka*. The idea of the Lord he expresses by the words *īśa*, *īśitā*, *īśvara* and so on. The influence of classical Sanskrit Kāvya is so penetrating on him that he adopts a non-Sanskrit word *irigāla* for charcoal used in one of them, the *Naiṣadhīyacarita* of Śrī Harṣa:

Since the approach of the Christian scholars in India, as pointed out at the very start of the present discussion, was to confront the non-Christian local people, particularly the educated ones among them,

through their own medium, the medium for which they had special adoration, to enter into them, to bring them round to their view, they took to composing such works as approximated to the old Hindu Sanskrit works in nomenclature and style. Such works are the *Kriśṭāyana*, the *Girigītā* and the *Kristunāmasahasram* modelled as they are, as can be seen from their names on the *Rāmāyaṇa*, the *Bhagavadgītā* and the *Viṣṇu sahasranāma* respectively. There is reported to be a *Kriṣṭopaniṣad* also composed in the typical Upaniṣadic style.

From what has been said above, it should be clear that there has grown in Sanskrit a considerable corpus of Christian literature both in original and in translation. The literature, though composed primarily to reach the Sanskrit-knowing intelligentsia to motivate it to Christianity, has a lot to commend itself even as work of art and consequently deserves wide notice not only in India but also beyond its shores.

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  10. *Māthlikhitah Susamivādah*, Baptist Mission Press, Calcutta, 1877.
  11. *Mārkalikhitah Susamivādah*, Baptist Mission Press, Calcutta, 1878.
  12. *Satyadharmaśāstram : Mārkalikhitah Susamivādah*, Baptist Mission Press, Calcutta, 1884.
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  15. *Bhagavato Jīśasah Pārvatī Śikṣā* (Translation in Sanskrit of the *Sermon on the Mount*), by Lachmi Dhar Shastri, Published by the translator, Delhi, 1982.
  16. *Giriprabhāṣaṇam* (Translation in Sanskrit of the *Sermon on the Mount*), The Bible Society of India, Bangalore, 1974.
  17. *Girigītā* (Translation of the *Sermon on the Mount in Sanskrit*), by K.P. Urumese, Published by the translator, Trivandrum, 1974.
  18. *Khr̥ṣṭaya jñavidhiḥ* : The Ordo Missae Translated into Sanskrit from Latin by Ambrose Sureschandra Roy, Calcutta, 1926.
  19. *Tīsvāroktā Śāstradhārā* (*The Course of Divine Revela*

- tion), by John Mulr, Baptist Mission Press, Calcutta, 1846.
20. *Paramātmastava* (A Christian hymn in Sanskrit verse), Mission Press, Allahabad, 1853.
  21. *Paulacaritam*, Calcutta, 1850.
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  23. *Khr̥ṣṭadharmakaumudī* by J.R. Ballantyne, London, 1859.
  24. *Khr̥ṣṭadharmakaumudīsamālocana* by Brajajal Mukhopadhyaya, Calcutta, 1894.
  25. *Kristubhāgavatam*, by P.C. Devassia, Jayabharatam, Trivandrum, 1977.
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  27. *Yeśucaritam* by J.Marcel, Second Edition, L.F.I. Press, Ernakulam, 1969.
  28. *Mahātīyāgī* by M.O. Avara (Translated into Sanskrit from original Malayalam) by Narayana Plisharoty, Published by the author (M.O. Avara), N. Perur 1976.
  29. *Kristāyana* by Guru Gyan Prakash (Fr. Proksh S.V.D.) (Though in Hindi it has a last verse of every Chapter in Sanskrit),
  30. *Kristunāmasahasram* by I.C. Chacko. Still in manuscript.
  31. *Kristopanīṣad*. Details not available.

1. XVII.40. 2. XVII.52. 3.IV.48.4.IV.52

5. VIII.436. IV.47. IV.58. I.2.

9. I.2.10. Preliminary verses, verse 12.11. Ibid., verse 1.

12. II. 38.13. II. 44.14. p. 9.15. p.13.

16. verse 7,117. verses 54-55.18. verse 94



1. The first part of the book is devoted to a general survey of the history of the Indian people. It is written in a simple and straightforward manner, and is suitable for the general reader. The author has done a great deal of research, and his work is well documented. The book is a valuable contribution to the history of India.

2. The second part of the book is devoted to a detailed study of the social and economic conditions of the Indian people. It is written in a more scholarly manner, and is suitable for the student and the researcher. The author has done a great deal of research, and his work is well documented. The book is a valuable contribution to the history of India.

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6. The sixth part of the book is devoted to a detailed study of the literary conditions of the Indian people. It is written in a more scholarly manner, and is suitable for the student and the researcher. The author has done a great deal of research, and his work is well documented. The book is a valuable contribution to the history of India.

7. The seventh part of the book is devoted to a detailed study of the artistic conditions of the Indian people. It is written in a more scholarly manner, and is suitable for the student and the researcher. The author has done a great deal of research, and his work is well documented. The book is a valuable contribution to the history of India.

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When the Christian missionaries descended on India in the last century they found Sanskrit still to be the medium of higher thought and culture there. People of upper castes who mattered most used it widely. The missionaries of the time thought that if they were to make any impact on Indian society, they would have to learn that language of higher castes and render their writings in it to be accessible to them. Once the Brahmins or others who had the upper hand in society were drawn to Christianity, it would be easier for them, the missionaries, to spread the message of Christ among the common people who would feel attracted towards it, having found their superiors taking to it. With this idea in view they took to the study of Sanskrit, wrote its grammars, compiled its dictionaries, prepared its text books. With all this equipment they took to the translation of the Bible into Sanskrit, the Old and the New Testaments, the Sermon on the Mount and so on. They also composed many an original work in Sanskrit, in verse and prose on Lord Christ. The result : A whole class of Christian literature in Sanskrit grew up over a period of time. It would be worth its while to have a close look at it. And this is what is precisely going to be attempted in the pages to follow.

The activity in the field of the translation of the Bible into Sanskrit began as early as 1808. The New Testament of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ was translated into Sanskrit from the Original Greek by the missionaries at Serampore under the Superintendence of William Carey in three volumes, the third volume making its appearance in 1811, three years after the publication of the first. This was followed by the Sanskrit translation of the Old and the New Testaments, again from Serampore in 1821. In 1845 the Baptist Mission Press, Calcutta, the Book of the Prophet Isaiah in Sanskrit. In 1850 the same Press published the Book of the Prophet Isaiah in Sanskrit. In 1850 the same Press published the Book of the Prophet Isaiah in Sanskrit.







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in every crea- of them is 1974. The Sermon also appears in a succinct form  
tive work on the life A very interesting work in the field of transla-  
of Lord Christ./

## Sanskrit



The following is a list of the names of the persons who have been mentioned in the text of the book, in the order in which they are mentioned. The names are given in the original form in which they appear in the text, and are not altered in any way. The names are given in the original form in which they appear in the text, and are not altered in any way.



Apart from translations there has been a lot of creative activity in relation to Christianity in Sanskrit both in the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. About half a dozen smaller works like the Īśvaroktasahasradhārā The Course of Divine Revelation by John Muir, the Paramātmastava, a hymn in verse, Paulacarita, a short life of Apostle Paul in verse, the Khrstasāṅgita, the history of Jesus Christ in verse, the Khrstadharmakauṇḍī by J.P. Ballantyne, comparison of Christianity with Hindu philosophy, in prose and a critical review of the last Khrstadharmakauṇḍīsammālocana in prose by Brajēśvar Bhūtopādhyaya.

The twentieth century too has seen many an original publication on Christ and Christianity the latest and the biggest of which is the Kristubbāgavatam, a Mahākāvya in Sanskrit in ~~sanskrit~~ thirty three cantos with a thousand and six hundred stanzas on the life of Lord Christ by P.C. Devassia which won him in 1930 the coveted Sahitya Akademi Award, India's highest award in creative writing in Sanskrit. The thirty three cantos of the Kāvya correspond to the number of the Lord's life. Although in narrating the story of the Lord the author relies on the versions of the Gospels and some reputed biographers of Christ and is faithful to incidents as recorded there, yet he shows his freedom and imagination as a poet to introduce poetic elements which however do not dilute the authenticity of the narrative. The poem is simple and straightforward, composed in the much-valued Vaidarbhi style.

The Mahākāvya, the greatest so far, on Lord Christ in Sanskrit has, as the author himself points out in the Preface, many allusions to and illustrations from the Hindu Purāṇas and epics. This the author ascribes to his growth in an atmosphere of Sanskrit literature which could not but appear even in a work on Christ. Another great influence on the author in this was His Eminence Joseph Cardinal Parecattil, the Archbishop of Ernakulam who he says, believes that the Church in India must have its roots in the culture and the







(4)  
traditions of the land. A Sanskrit scholar, he has played an important role in the Indianization of the Church.

The stanzas in the Mahākāvya have a flow of their own which cannot but charm a reader. A stanza or two from Canto XVII dealing with the Sermon on the Mount could well be reproduced here by way of a specimen :

bhikṣā tvaya dakṣiṇastadattā  
na jñāyatāṁ vānakareṇa te sā |  
dāsyā caiva nibhṛtaṁ kṛtāya  
pitā phalaṁ dāsyati guptadarsī ||

"When you give alms, do not let the left hand know what your right hand has done. For the alms-giving thus done in secret, Your Father who sees in secret shall reward you."

yuyam nā sañcinuta nidhiṁ ātārthan urvyāṁ hi yasmāt  
kṛtādyas tāṁ kṣayam upanayanty atra muṣṇanti caurāḥ |  
svarge tāṁ sañcinuta vibhavaṁ ye hi tair na hrियन्ते  
vittam yasmin bhavati bhuvane tatra cittaṁ ca vah syat ||<sup>2</sup>

"Do not lay up for your self treasures on earth, where moths and other insects consume them, and where thieves break in and steal them ; but lay up these treasures in heaven where they are not consumed by them, for, where your treasure is, in that world will your heart also be".

Of the smaller Kāvya dealing with the life of Lord Christ could be mentioned Sree Yēśusourabham by Soma Varma Raja which has 67, 76, 78 and 86 stanzas in its first, second, third and fourth canto respectively. The Kāvya closes with five hymns of which the first is a Prayer, a string of seven stanzas called the Bhajanaseptakam, the second, a hymn to the Sacred Heart, the third, the Praise of Christ, the fourth, the Hymn to Christ and the fifth, the Bhaktajīvisā, an expression of the desire of the devotee to see the Master and to live according to His tenets. In its 301 stanzas in mellifluous Sanskrit the author sums up the whole story of the Bible. Though following the Biblical narrative faithfully, he takes reasonable licence in versification. The reactions of the multitude gathered at the foot of the Cross, Christ's enemies, His devotees, the sorrowful women and the good men and their

1. XCVI. 40.

2. XCVI. 52.







(6)  
ject matter and where is the great magnificent story  
Jesus. It is an attempt like that of a sick man trying  
to climb a high mountain".

which clearly is inspired by the well-known Raghuvamsha  
verse :

kva guryaprabhave vameśa

kva calpavisaya matih

titinsur dūstaram mohad

udupenasmī sagaram

"Where is the race spring from the sun and where is my  
intellect of limited scope. It is under a delusion that  
I am desirous of crossing, by means of a raft, the ocean  
so difficult to be crossed".

A spirit of the divine and a sense of devotion pervade  
the whole of the Sreeyesusourabham which is indeed a happy  
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and the heavenly personality of Lord Christ in a most impres-  
sive manner and amply reveals the poet in the author whose  
Khandakavya-it is to this category that his work belongs  
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The author is in the habit of twisting some of the  
foreign words to give them a different look, not necessa-  
rily Sanskritic always, to make them fit into Sanskrit di-  
ction. Abraham he puts as Abrahā, David as Davida,  
Gabriel as Gabriyat, Elizabeth as Yolisva, May as both  
Mori and Moriya, Augustus Caesar as Agastasisara, Christ  
as Ise and Yesu, Herod as Haroda, Judea as Tudaya, Messiah  
as both Mihisa and Misiha, Nazareth as Nasratana, Jeru-  
salem as Jasrela, Magdalen as Magdalena and so on.

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literature. The writers of the works on Christ and Chris-  
tianity, even tough devout Christians, inheriting or adopt-  
ing the Sanskrit tradition as they did, could not keep  
themselves away from it even while dealing with themes not  
part and parcel of it. By sheer habit sometimes they would  
use words to denote new ideas. The use of the word vaidika  
in the poem under reference in the sense of a Christian  
priest is a case in point. An extension of this word is  
Vaidikya in the sense of a Christian Seminary :







addresses to the crucified are all presented in the present work with deftness. Both the genius and the originality of the author are reflected in this part and the words of the spectators on Calvary sink deep into the heart :

krūṣa paṭanaviśālo 'py ugrarūpaṃ tvādiyaṃ  
manasi kalayāto bhīṃ pāpinaḥ kasya na syāt |  
tvam aśi kathinapīḍābhogaparyāyavācī  
nīkhalajananīṣevyo divyasaṅgana jātaḥ ||<sup>1</sup>

"Oh wide Cross ! Who will not be frightened to see or think about you. You have become another word for grave pain. But now you have a thing of worship, for you have carried our Lord on you".

In the lamentation of Mary, the mother of Lord Christ, a note of intense sorrow is struck. The words therein betray in full the motherly pangs. It looks while writing about this the poet had at the back of his mind the description of the lamentation of Rati in the Kumārasambhava of Kālidāsa. Not only is the whole setting the same, even the metre is the same :

gatasañjñāṃ avekṣya viḥvalā  
Mariyā svāṅkagatāṃ nīṭamajam |  
vilalāpa sabāspalocanā  
samsaḍhkhān akhilāṅś ca kurvati ||<sup>2</sup>

"Mary saw the lifeless body of her son on her lap. She was overcome with grief. She cried shedding tears, making all present there equally sorry."

The expression vilalapa sabāspalocana cannot but remind one of the Kumārasambhava's vilalapa/sabāspagaḍ-gaḍam.<sup>3</sup> Similarly do the lines :

krpano mama daurghyam ayusaḥ  
kathinaḥ khalv iha dattavaṇ vidhiḥ |<sup>4</sup>

of Kumārasambhava's :

na vidirye kathinaḥ khalu ś riyah<sup>5</sup>  
Kālidāsa's influence is ~~not~~ <sup>not</sup> limited to the Kumārasambhava only, it extends also to the Raghu-  
vamśa. His stanza in the beginning of his work :

kva me nirvisaya budhiḥ  
kva sriyesumbhakathā |  
mohaḥ bhavany aruruksur  
amayavi mahagirim ||<sup>6</sup>

"Where is the intellect devoid of the knowledge of the







subject matter and where is the great magnificent story of Jesus. It is an attempt like that of a sick man trying to climb a high mountain".

which clearly is inspired by the well-known Raghuvamsha verse :

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Vatavaturadesiya-

vaidikasramacoditah |

karomi nutanahyanam

Yesusaurabhasam nitan || 1

"Impelled by the friends in the Vatavathur Seminary I compose this Kavya, the Sriyesusaurabham".

It was again the force of the Sanskrit tradition that weighed with the present author to start his Kavya on the life of Lord Christ with an invocation to Goddess Sarasvati :

ya tu sangitasahityakalacaitanyarupini |

satam adharabhitam tam vande vidyadhivatani || 2

"I salute the Goddess of Learning who wields the authority over music, literature and art. She is the support of all good-natured people and poets."

It is the influence of Sanskrit tradition again that makes the author refer to the celestial Ganges in the context of Holy Mary carrying Lord Christ :

talpam gavadanibhadram citpurno garbhadharini |

sa 'dhyavasajasa Meri hamsivabhranaditatan || 3

"Mary who was carrying the son of God in her womb was lying in the manger as the swan lies in the celestial Ganges."

The description in the work of the regions becoming bright and gentle breeze blowing at the birth of Christ is a piece with similar descriptions which have become a type now in Sanskrit literature :

prasadh ksanam evasa marutas ca sukha vavuh |

babhuvar nirmalas capah lopesv api sarasv api || 4

Like the other poems on Christ's life, this poem too has the Sermon on the Mount in brief.

in Sanskrit / Another smaller original work on the life  
rose/ of Lord Christ is the Yesucaritam by J. Marcel who styles  
himself as Marsalacarya. The work he divides in five  
Adhyayas, in beautiful, chaste Sanskrit which has a classical  
ring about it. The entire life of the Lord is put here  
succinctly in an easy and fluent style. Two small para-  
graphs from will be sufficient to form an idea of its  
Sanskrit :

sa yada svamni dattam Visayasya pustakam udagha-  
tayat tada tatredam likhitam avartata. Isvaro mayy avas-  
thitah... visadavidirnantarangan sukhayitum baddhanam  
muktin andhanam darsanam ce pradatu... nam prajighaya sah. 5-







(3)  
 "When he opened the book of Visaya given to him he found it written there. The Lord is in me. He has sent me to provide happiness to the sad and to give release to the bound and sight to the blind".

paran tu bho srotarah, yusman idam vaktum abhyutsahe-  
 ye yusmabhyam druhyanti tesaṁ api hitam eva tanuta. yusman  
 sapanti ye tebhyo 'py asisaṁ eva datta. ye yusman apavadanti  
 tesaṁ api hitam eva prarthayadhva. yas tava ekasmin kapole  
 praharati tasmai kapolaṁ anyam api pradarsaya... yo va ko va  
 bhavatu tavako yacakah, dehi tasmai. na abhivaneha tatpratya-  
 danam. kim ca yusman prati yadsam acaram abhitasatha, tadsa  
 bhavatu yusmakam api itaresv acarah.. 6

But O you the listeners, I feel like telling -As if you Even  
 those who are hostile to you, you do good to them too. Those  
 who curse you, to them too you bless. Those who denounce you,  
 you pray for their welfare too. To the one who slaps you on  
 one cheek, you show him the other one. Whosoever may ask you  
 for something, give that to him. Don't care for ~~it as a return~~  
 any return for it. Moreover, the kind of treatment you want  
 for your self, meet the same to others.

The next work which is not original in Sanskrit but  
 very much looks like original is the Mahatyagi of M.O. Avara.  
 The work was originally composed in Malayalam but was trans-  
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 in verse meaning literally The Man of Great Sacrifice is a  
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The Mahatyagi is a fine work of poetry in 163 stanzas.  
 The thought in it so serene, the language so imaginative and  
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 their eyes moistened. The lines which portray the effect  
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CC-O. Prof. Satya Vrat Shastri Collection. Digitized By Siddhanta eGangotri Gyaan Kosha



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 praharati tasmai kapalam anyan api pradarsaya... yo va ko va  
 bhavatu tavako yacakah, dehi tasmai. na abhivandha tatpratya-  
 danam. kim ca yusman prati yadsam acaram abhlasatha, tadso  
 bhavatu yusman api itaresv acarah..<sup>6</sup>

But O you the listeners, I feel like telling -As ~~as~~ ~~yx~~ Even those who are hostile to you, you do good to them too. Those who curse you, ~~as~~ then too you bless. Those who denounce you, you pray for their welfare too. To the one who slaps you on one cheek, you show him the other one. Whosoever may ask you for something, give that to him. Don't care for ~~it~~ ~~any~~ ~~return~~ ~~for~~ ~~it~~ any return for it. Moreover, the kind of treatment you want for your self, meet the same to others.

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karunyadramate keamasva bho aparadham krtam obhir idream (  
yad ime na viduh svakarma va na ca va tvatkarunam api prabho ||<sup>1</sup>

The work being a Kavya, a poem, it affords the author ample scope for the flight of his imagination. The arms of Christ stretched on the Cross the poet takes as indicative of the readiness on the part of Christ to embrace or as wings to soar aloft to carry all the misery of mankind on his shoulders :

nijaparsvayuge bhujaadvayan  
subhadayi pravisarayan bhavan |  
krusadaruni kim nu vartate  
jagadaslesanabaddhakautukah ||  
athava maralokagam vyatham  
akhilam skandhatale tvam udvahan |  
pravitatya patatragordvayam  
dharanito dayitum kim udyatah ||<sup>2</sup>

The Sanskrit expression in the poem has a classical ring about it:

mihirah kiranaish nijash subhair  
jagadandhatvan apakaroty asau |  
dyutim ayya mahatmanah katham  
punar ikseta divandhakausikah ||<sup>3</sup>

"While the sun with its powerful rays takes away the blindness of the earth, how can the owl which cannot see during daytime see the greatness of the Great Light?"

Like the poet of the Sreeyesuscurebham the poet of the Mahatyagi too Sanskritizes many foreign words by just twisting them. The classic example of this is the word krusa which can be formed from the Sanskrit root krus, to cry, for the English Cross. The same he does with words paradise which he puts in Sanskrit as parudisa and pelican which he puts in Sanskrit as palikka. The idea of Lord he expresses by the words isa, isita, isvara and so on. The influence of classical Sanskrit Kavyas is so penetrating in him that he adopts a non-Sanskrit word ingala for charcoal used in one of them, the Naisadhiyacarita of Sri Harsa.

Since the approach of the Christian scholars in India as pointed out at the very start of the present ~~at~~ discussion, was to confront the non-Christian local



the work being a large, a poem, it affords the author  
to escape for the light of his imagination. The exact  
point attached on the cross the poet takes an indicative  
the readiness on the part of Christ to endure or to  
to some extent to carry all the misery of mankind  
his life.

the German, especially in the poem has a classical ring  
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people, particularly the educated ones among them, through their own medium, the medium for which they had special adoration, to enter into them, to bring them round to their view, they took to composing such works as approximated to the old Hindu Sanskrit works in nomenclature and style. Such works are the Kristayana, the Girigita and the Kristu-sahasranama, modelled as they are, as can be seen from their names on the Ramayana, the Bhagavadgita and the Visnu-sahasranama respectively. There is reported to be a Kristo-panisad also composed in the typical Upanisadic style.

From what has been said above, it should be clear that there has grown in Sanskrit a considerable corpus Christian literature both in original and in translation. The literature though composed primarily to reach the Sanskrit-knowing intelligentsia to motivate it to Christianity has a lot to commend itself even as work of art and consequently deserves to be more widely known not only in India but also beyond its shores.

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in, particularly the ancient ones among them,  
and their own medium, the medium for which they had special  
attention, to enter into them, to bring them round to their  
own, to bring them round to their own as approximated  
to the old Hindu Sanskrit style in nomenclature and style.  
Words are the ingredients, the bricks and the stones  
of the language, modelled as they are, as can be seen from their  
on the language, the Bhagavadgita and the Vishnu-  
sutra respectively. There is reported to be a Hindu-  
style also composed in the typical Sanskrit style.  
From what has been said above, it should be clear  
that the Sanskrit is a considerable corpus  
of a literature both in original and in translation.  
It is a literature though composed primarily to reach the  
English-speaking intelligentsia to motivate it to Christianity.  
Let us remember itself even as work of art and  
merely deserves to be as now widely known not only  
but also beyond its shores.

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30. Kristopanisad. Details not available.

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1. The first part of the paper is devoted to a general survey of the literature on the subject of the history of the Indian people. The author discusses the various theories and hypotheses advanced by different scholars regarding the origin and development of the Indian race. He also mentions the different views on the migration of the Indian people from other parts of the world.

2. The second part of the paper is devoted to a detailed study of the physical characteristics of the Indian people. The author discusses the various features of the Indian physique, such as the height, weight, skin color, hair, eyes, nose, mouth, and ears. He also mentions the different types of the Indian physique, such as the tall, slender type, the short, stocky type, and the intermediate type.

3. The third part of the paper is devoted to a study of the mental characteristics of the Indian people. The author discusses the various features of the Indian mind, such as the intelligence, memory, imagination, and emotions. He also mentions the different types of the Indian mind, such as the highly intelligent type, the average type, and the less intelligent type.

4. The fourth part of the paper is devoted to a study of the cultural characteristics of the Indian people. The author discusses the various features of the Indian culture, such as the language, religion, art, and literature. He also mentions the different types of the Indian culture, such as the highly developed type, the average type, and the less developed type.

5. The fifth part of the paper is devoted to a study of the social characteristics of the Indian people. The author discusses the various features of the Indian society, such as the caste system, the joint family system, and the village community. He also mentions the different types of the Indian society, such as the highly organized type, the average type, and the less organized type.

6. The sixth part of the paper is devoted to a study of the economic characteristics of the Indian people. The author discusses the various features of the Indian economy, such as the agriculture, the handicrafts, and the trade. He also mentions the different types of the Indian economy, such as the highly developed type, the average type, and the less developed type.

7. The seventh part of the paper is devoted to a study of the political characteristics of the Indian people. The author discusses the various features of the Indian polity, such as the monarchy, the republic, and the democracy. He also mentions the different types of the Indian polity, such as the highly developed type, the average type, and the less developed type.

8. The eighth part of the paper is devoted to a study of the religious characteristics of the Indian people. The author discusses the various features of the Indian religion, such as the Hinduism, the Buddhism, the Jainism, and the Islam. He also mentions the different types of the Indian religion, such as the highly developed type, the average type, and the less developed type.

9. The ninth part of the paper is devoted to a study of the literary characteristics of the Indian people. The author discusses the various features of the Indian literature, such as the epic, the drama, the novel, and the poetry. He also mentions the different types of the Indian literature, such as the highly developed type, the average type, and the less developed type.

10. The tenth part of the paper is devoted to a study of the artistic characteristics of the Indian people. The author discusses the various features of the Indian art, such as the painting, the sculpture, and the architecture. He also mentions the different types of the Indian art, such as the highly developed type, the average type, and the less developed type.



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